

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MC-02 SAJ-01 EB-11 OMB-01 ACDA-19

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SIL-01

LAB-06 DRC-01 /146 W

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R 121705Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9894

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO SECY OF THE TREASURY WASHDC

SECY OF COMMERCE WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 0932

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS, BEXP, NATO, BE

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: F-104 REPLACEMENT

REF: BRUSSELS 679

1. SUMMARY: MAAG CONTACTS REPORT THAT SERIES OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ON BOTH BRITISH JAGUAR AND SWEDISH SAAB BEING CONTENDERS FOR THE F-104 REPLACEMENT WILL SOON APPEAR. HOWEVER, NEITHER AIRCRAFT IS SERIOUS CONTENDER. BELGIAN MILITARY RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO THE
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MINDEF WITH REQUEST FOR FURTHER MINISTERIAL LEVEL DIS-

CUSSIONS ON JOINT PROCUREMENT BETWEEN BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY AND POSSIBLY DENMARK. BELGIAN AIRSTAFF DOES NOT FEEL THAT ANY OF 4 MAJOR COMPETITORS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED AT THIS POINT. BELGIAN AIRSTAFF IS STILL CONSIDERING THE LOCKHEED LANCER DESPITE PROBLEMS OF LOCKHEED C-130H OFFSET ARRANGEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. MAAG HAS BEEN WARNED TO EXPECT NEWSPAPER ARTICLES WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS ON JAGUAR AND VIGGEN BEING EVALUATED BY BAF AS F-104G REPLACEMENT. EVALUATIONS ARE GOING ON AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED. BELGIAN AIRSTAFF IS LOOKING AT BOTH THESE AIRCRAFT FOR POLITICAL REASONS BUT NEITHER ONE IS OR WILL BE CONSIDERED AS REPLACEMENT FOR F-104. BELGIAN AF OFFICIAL POLICY IS THAT EVALUATIONS ARE TO PROVIDE FALL BACK OPTIONS IN CASE CO-DEVELOPMENT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOB. THE U.S. A-7 (LTV) DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE A CHANCE FOR ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION.

3. BAF HAS SUBMITTED ITS INITIAL RECOMMENDATION TO MINDEF FOR F-104 REPLACEMENT. EVALUATION WILL CONTINUE ONCE MINDEF HAS ANSWERED TWO QUESTIONS. FIRST CONCERNS PERMISSION FOR GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT CONTACT ON CO-SELECTION OF ONE AIRCRAFT FOR THE F-104 REPLACEMENT IN BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS AND NORWAY. SECOND INVOLVES ALTERNATE POLICY OF UNILATERAL BELGIAN CHOICE FOLLOWED BY EFFORT TO CONVINCE OTHER COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW BELGIAN LEAD. THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN EXTENSIVE INTER-MILITARY CONTACT ON THE F-104 REPLACEMENT: CHIEFS OF PLANS AND PROGRAMS IN BELGIUM, NL AND NORWAY HAVE MET IN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE COMMON POSITION. THEY HAVE ALL REQUESTED THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS TO PURSUE THE PROBLEM OF REPLACEMENT AT A MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

4. CONTRARY TO REPORTED DECISION ON NUMBER OF COMPETITORS REMAINING IN THE DECISION PROCESS (REFTTEL), BELGIAN AF HAS NOT RPT NOT BEEN TOLD TO ELIMINATE ANY OF U.S. COMPETITORS. AF CONTINUES TO PROCURE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM ALL U.S. CONTENDERS.

5. LOCKHEED OFFSET PROBLEM ON ITS C-130H CONTRACT HAS
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BEEN USED AS ARGUMENT AGAINST LANCER PURCHASE. HOWEVER, AS VALUE OF LANCER CONTRACT SO MUCH GREATER (APPROXIMATELY \$600 MILLION AS COMPARED WITH \$60 MILLION) THAN HERCULES CONTRACT, AND WOULD INCLUDE FIRM GUARANTEES CONCERNING OFFSET, BELGIAN AF SOURCES SAY LOCKHEED STILL IN CONTENTION FOR F-104 REPLACEMENT CHOICE. STRAUSZ-HUPE

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